

Amendments to the Claims

1 Claim 1 (currently amended): A method of tracking ~~animal~~ transfers of groups of animals with
2 animal passports, the method comprising:

3 creating an animal passport to represent a transfer of a group of animals from a transferor
4 to a transferee at a location, the group comprising at least two animals and the location
5 comprising at least one of a city and a state;

6 assigning a unique passport identifier to the created animal passport, thereby providing a
7 unique ~~identification of~~ identifier for the transfer;

8 recording, for the created animal passport, the unique passport identifier assigned to the
9 passport, a count of the animals in the group, the location, descriptive information identifying the
10 animals in the group, an identification of the transferor, and an identification of the transferee; and

11 repeating the creating, the ~~[[and]]~~ assigning, and the recording for each of at least one
12 subsequent transfer of ~~one or more~~ any of the animals in the group, wherein the animal passport
13 created for each subsequent transfer also records the unique passport identifier assigned to each
14 most-recent previous transfer of those animals.

1 Claim 2 (currently amended): The method according to Claim 1, wherein each of the animal
2 passports is signed, by ~~[[a]]~~ the transferor and the transferee who are parties to ~~[[each]]~~ the
3 transfer represented by the signed animal passport, to certify ~~thereby certifying~~ the transfer
4 ~~represented by the signed animal passport.~~

1 Claim 3 (currently amended): The method according to Claim 1, wherein the ~~further comprising~~

2 recording ~~uses the animal passports in~~ a repository that is maintained by a third party that is
3 distinct from each transferor and each transferee who are parties to any of the transfers.

1 Claim 4 (currently amended): The method according to Claim 1, further comprising using the
2 unique animal passport identifiers identifier assigned to each transfer of any selected one of the
3 animals to track all of the locations of the selected one of the animals.

1 Claim 5 (currently amended): The method according to Claim 1, wherein a first of the animal
2 passports is created for a first transfer following birth of the animals in the group, and wherein
3 repeating the creating continues for each subsequent transfer until death of the animals in the
4 group, the created animal passports thereby reflecting reflect a complete lifetime of the animals
5 and being ~~are therefore~~ usable to track all transfers of the animals throughout their lifetime.

Claim 6 (canceled)

1 Claim 7 (original): The method according to Claim 1, wherein the transfers are transfers of
2 ownership.

1 Claim 8 (original): The method according to Claim 1, wherein the transfers are transfers of
2 possession.

1 Claim 9 (original): The method according to Claim 1, wherein at least one of the transfers is a

transfer of ownership and at least one of the transfers is a transfer of possession.

Claim 10 (currently amended): The method according to Claim 1, wherein the creating, the ~~[[and]]~~ assigning, and the recording are also repeated for subsequent transfers of animal products derived from the animals in the group following slaughter of the animals in the group.

Claim 11 (currently amended): The method according to Claim 1, wherein the descriptive information identifying the animals in the group comprises ~~animal passports further specify~~ individual animal identifications of the ~~transferred~~ animals.

Claim 12 (currently amended): The method according to Claim 1, wherein at least one additional animal is ~~animals are~~ included in one or more of the subsequent transfers, and wherein the animal passport created for such subsequent transfers also records the unique passport identifier assigned to each most-recent previous transfer of ~~[[those]]~~ each of the at least one additional ~~animals~~ animal.

Claim 13 (currently amended): The method according to Claim 1, ~~wherein animal passports are created for each transfer during a lifetime of the animals and further comprising:~~
~~—— recording each of the animal passports in a repository maintained by a third party, wherein each of the animal passports further comprises a specification of how many animals are represented by each transfer, a location of the animals during a timeframe covered by the animal passport, and an identification of one or more transferors and one or more transferees who are~~

parties to each transfer, wherein the third party is distinct from the transferors and the transferees;
and

determining a country of origin for a ~~one or more selected ones of the animals~~ animal
using ~~[[each]] the~~ unique passport identifier associated ~~therewith~~ with each passport representing
any group in which the selected animal has been transferred to determine, from the location
recorded for each passport, to determine all locations in which the selected ~~ones have~~ animal has
been located throughout ~~[[their]]~~ its lifetime.

Claim 14 (currently amended): The method according to Claim 1, ~~wherein:~~

~~each of the animal passports further comprises a specification of how many animals were~~
~~transferred in the transfer represented by that animal passport, a location of the animals during a~~
~~timeframe covered by the animal passport, and an identification of one or more transferors and~~
~~one or more transferees who are parties to that transfer; and~~

further comprising:

determining, for a selected one of the animals, all locations in which the selected
animal has been located throughout its lifetime~~[[,]]~~ using the location recorded for each animal
passport representing any group in which ~~associated with~~ the selected animal has been transferred;
and

preparing a country of origin claim for the selected animal, using the determined
locations, wherein the country of origin claim indicates whether the selected animal has been
located only in a selected country throughout the lifetime of the animal.

1 Claim 15 (currently amended): The method according to Claim [[1]] 5, ~~wherein animal passports~~
2 ~~are created for each transfer during a lifetime of the animals and further comprising:~~

3 ~~— recording each of the animal passports in a repository, wherein each of the animal~~
4 ~~passports further comprises a specification of how many animals are represented by each transfer;~~
5 ~~a location of the animals during a timeframe covered by the animal passport, and an identification~~
6 ~~of one more transferors and one or more transferees who are parties to each transfer;~~

7 constructing a chain of transfers for a selected one of the animals using the unique
8 passport identifier assigned to an animal passport created to represent a transfer at death of the
9 selected one to determine the location of the transfer represented by the animal passport, and
10 iteratively determining each previous location of the selected one by using each of the unique
11 passport identifier recorded on the animal passport for the most-recent previous transfer to obtain
12 the animal passport created to represent each previous transfer of the selected one, until reaching
13 the first of unique passport identifiers recorded on the animal passports associated with the first
14 transfer of the selected animal one, thereby determining all locations in which the selected ~~animal~~
15 one has been located throughout its lifetime; and

16 verifying a country of origin claim for the selected ~~animal one~~ by comparing the
17 determined locations to one or more locations stated in the country of origin claim.

1 Claim 16 (withdrawn): A system for uniquely identifying transfers of animals in groups, the
2 system comprising:

3 a unique identifier associated with each transfer of a group of animals;

4 a repository for recording the unique identifier of each of the transfers, along with a

5 specification of how many animals are in the group and an identification of one or more
6 transferors and one or more transferees who are parties to the transfer; and
7 linkage from each subsequent transfer of any of the animals to a most-recent prior transfer
8 of those animals, the linkage comprising a specified association between a new unique identifier
9 associated with each such subsequent transfer and the unique identifier of the prior transfer.

1 Claim 17 (withdrawn): The system according to Claim 16, wherein the linkage enables tracing
2 transfers of a subset comprising one or more of the transferred animals by accessing, for each of
3 the transfers of the animals in the subset, the specified association between the unique identifier of
4 the most-recent prior transfer and the new unique identifier of the subsequent transfer for that
5 subset.

1 Claim 18 (withdrawn): A method for identifying transfers of groups of animals from birth to
2 death, comprising:
3 associating a unique identifier with a transfer of animals from an original owner thereof;
4 associating a different unique identifier with each subsequent transfer of the animals or any
5 subset thereof; and
6 linking, at each subsequent transfer, the different unique identifier with the unique
7 identifier associated with a most-recent previous transfer of the animals in that subsequent
8 transfer.

1 Claim 19 (withdrawn): The method according to Claim 18, wherein additional animals are

2 included in one or more of the subsequent transfers, and wherein the unique identifier of the most-
3 recent previous transfers of those additional animals is also linked with the different unique
4 identifier of the subsequent transfer.

Claim 20 (canceled)

1 Claim 21 (currently amended): A method of providing country of origin claims, the method
2 comprising:

3 completing, for ~~each of a plurality of transfers~~ every transfer of one or more groups of
4 animals from transferors to transferees, each group comprising at least two animals, a passport
5 document to represent the transfer, wherein each of the passport documents has associated
6 therewith a unique passport identifier, thereby providing a unique identifier for the transfer,
7 further comprising:

8 specifying, on the passport document, a count of the animals transferred,
9 descriptive information for the animals transferred, and a location of the transfer, the location
10 comprising at least one of a city and a state;

11 specifying, on the passport document, the unique passport identifier associated
12 with any previous passport document completed to represent a previous transfer of the animals
13 transferred; and

14 signing the passport document, by the transferor and the transferee, to certify
15 ~~thereby certifying~~ the transfer;

16 recording each of the transfers in a repository maintained by a third party who is distinct

17 from the transferors and the transferees, further comprising:

18 creating an entry in the repository for each of the transfers, each of the entries
19 comprising the unique passport identifier associated with the passport document representing that
20 transfer, the count of the animals transferred, the descriptive information for the animals
21 transferred, the location of the transfer, and the unique passport identifier associated with any
22 previous passport document completed to represent a previous transfer of the animals transferred;
23 and

24 using the entries in the repository to determine, for a selected one of the animals, whether
25 a country of origin claim can be made stating that the selected one was always physically located,
26 from its birth to its death, in a particular country by comparing, in each of the entries that pertains
27 to transferring the selected animal, the location to the particular country.